

## Message Text

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41

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1487

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 1897

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE, PFOR, PARM, XG

SUBJECT: CSCE POLICY: RESPONDING TO SOVIETS ON VOLUNTARY NATURE OF  
MAEUVER CBM

REF: GENEVA 1766

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING UP DOVALEV STATEMENT IN REFTEL, SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN TO US ALONE AN ILLUSTRATIVE TEXT FOR A PURELY VOLUNTARY BASIS FOR MANEUVER CBM, AND PRESSED US IN MARCH 17 BILATERAL DELEGATIIN MEETING TO CONVINCE ALLIES TO ACCEPT A FORMULA ALONG THE LINES OF THEIR TEXT. SOVIETS ALSO TOLD US (BUT PROBABLY NOT OTHER ALLIES) THAT, IF WESTERN SIDE WOULD ACCEPT VOLUNTARY NATURE OF MANEUVER CBM, SOVIETS LATER WOULD SUBSTITUTE FIGURES (30-35,000 TROOPS) FOR "ARMY OR ARMY CORPS" IN THRESHOLD PARAMETER AND WOULD THEREAFTER SHOW FLEXIBILITY ON OTHER PARAMETERS. ALLIES ARE GENERALLY PREPARED TO ACCEDE TO VOLUNTARY LANGUAGE IN DUE COURSE, BUT ONLY ON CERTAIN CONDITIONS. THIS MESSAGE LAYS OUT TWO OPTIONS FOR THE US TO FOLLOW IN COMING WEEKS: (A) GENRALLY POSITIVE RESPONSE TO SOVIETS AND AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PREPARING A FORTHCOMING ALLIED COUNTERMOVE; OR (B) MORE RESERVED ATTITUDE TOWARD SOVIET GAMBIT, AND A LOW PROFILE WITH- IN NATO CAUCUS, LEAVING IT TO UK AND OTHERS TO TAKE THE LEAD. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON WHICH GENERAL  
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COURSE OF ACTION WE SHOULD FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

2. PURSUANT TO KOVALEV STATEMENT IN COORDINATING COMMITTEE (REF A) AND EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH US REPS ON NATURE OF COMMITMENT, SOVIET REPS (KOVALEV AND MENDELEVICH) IN MARCH 17 BILATERAL DELEGATION MEETING PRESSED US TO CONVINCE ALLIES TO ACCEPT FULLY VOLUNTARY LANGUAGE FOR MANEUVER CBM. FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATIVE TEXT WAS GIVEN TO US BY SOVIET DELEGATION (TEXT NOT AUTHORIZED BY MOSCOW): BEGIN QUOTE. THE PARTICIPATING STATES EXPRESS THEIR INTENTION TO NOTIFY, ON A FULLY VOLUNTARY BASIS, WHEN THEY CONSIDER IT POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE, MAJOR MILITARY MANEUVERS OF TROOPS TOGETHER WITH ANY POSSIBLE AIR OR NAVAL COMPONENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PROVISION: END QUOTE.

3. SOVIET REPS MADE CLEAR IN BILATERAL MEETING THAT THEY ARE FLEXIBLE ON EXACT LANGUAGE BUT WISH TO REACH "BASIC AGREEMENT" ON VOLUNTARY NATURE OF MANEUVER CBM TEXT. MENDELEVICH ADDED THAT SOVIETS ARE OPPOSED TO IDEAS OF CERTAIN "FRIENDS" OF US FOR DIFFERING LEVELS OF COMMITMENT FOR DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF MANEUVERS, AND WOULD WANT ALL NOTIFICATIONS OF MANEUVERS THAT ARE COVERED BY THE CBM TO BE ON THE SAME VOLUNTARY BASIS. ON TACTICAL ASPECTS, MENDELEVICH SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD US THAT SOVIET CONDITIONS WOULD BE MET IF THERE WERE A TEXT IN PLAY THAT WAS CLEARLY SUPPORTED BY ALLIES AS A WHOLE (NOT JUST US, UK, AND FRG). HOWEVER, TEXT WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT NEED TO BE REGISTERED.

4. WHILE ALLIES DO NOT SHARE ALL OF THIS BACKGROUND, THEY HAVE ALL HEARD KOVALEV AND MENDELEVICH COMMITTEE STATEMENTS AND HAVE A GENERAL IDEA OF WHAT THE SOVIETS WANT. SOVIETS HAVE ADDITIONALLY DESCRIBED THEIR AIMS IN FAIRLY PRECISE TERMS IN CONVERSATIONS WITH AT LEAST THE NETHERLANDS AND FRG CHIEFS OF DELEGATIONS, WITHOUT SHOWING THEM A TEXT.

5. AS INITIAL REACTIONS TO NEW SOVIET MOVE, ALLIES AGREED IN MARCH 17 CAUCUS TO WELCOME SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ANNOUNCE NATIONAL AS WELL AS MULTINATIONAL MANEUVERS  
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TO ALL CSCE PARTICIPANTS, BUT TO TEMPORIZE ON SOVIET IDEAS ABOUT THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE MEASURE, NEITHER ACCEPTING THEM NOR REJECTING THEM. WITHIN CAUCUS, HOWEVER, REPS WHO SPOKE ON SUBJECT (INCLUDING UK, FRG, ITALY, BELGIUM AND NETHERLANDS) GAVE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WILL IN DUE COURSE BE WILLING TO ACCEDE TO THE SOVIET VIEW, EVEN IF IT MEANS BACKING OFF THE "FIRM POLITICAL AND MORAL OBLIGATION" ORIGINALLY

SOUGHT BY ALLIES. ALLIED CONDITIONS FOR THIS CONCESSION WILL AT A MINIMUM BE FIRM SOVIET AGREEMENT TO RETAIN THE CONCEPT OF PRECISE MANEUVER PARAMETERS, AND PERHAPS ALSO EARLY SOVIET CONCESSIONS ON THE SPECIFICS OF ONE OR TWO PARAMETERS AS WELL.

6. IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, WE SEE TWO POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION FOR US IN FORTHCOMING WEEKS, THE FIRST INVOLVING A GREATER DEGREE OF COOPERATION WITH SOVIETS AND A STEPPED-UP PACE OF NEGOTIATIONS, AND THE SECOND INVOLVING LESS COOPERATION AND PROBABLY LESS MOVEMENT ON CBM'S THESE OPTIONS COULD BE SHAPED ALONG GENERAL LINES OUTLINED BELOW, ALTHOUGH DELEGATION WILL NEED SOME TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY IN IMPLEMENTING THEM.

A. WE COULD TELL SOVIETS THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO WORK WITH OUR ALLIES TO DEVELOP A VOLUNTARY MANEUVERS TEXT, BUT THAT THEY SHOULD GIVE AN ADDITIONAL SIGN OF FLEXIBILITY ON THE MANEUVER PARAMETERS ON THEIR PART (E.G.MN DESIGNATION OF A FIGURE TO REPLACE "ARMY CORPS" AS THEIR PROPOSED THRESHOLD FOR NOTIFICATION). THIS WE THINK WOULD LEAD TO A FAVORABLE ALLIED COUNTERMOVE. IF SOVIETS REACTED POSITIVELY, WE WOULD THEN PROMOTE WORK WITHIN ALLIED CAUCUS ON A POSSIBLE TEXT FOR MANEUVER CBM CONTAINING THE WORK "VOLUNTARY," POSSIBLY ALONG LINES OF FOLLOWING ILLUSTRATIVE TEXT PARALLELING

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ACTION SS-25

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1488

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 1897

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ALREADY REGISTERED OBSERVERS TEXT: BEGIN QUOTE: THE PARTICIPATING STATES (AUXILIARY VERB FOR NATURE OF COMMITMENT THROUGHOUT DOCUMENT) NOTIFY ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS OF MAJOR MILITARY MANEUVERS OF TROOPS TOGETHER WITH ANY POSSIBLE AIR OR NAVAL COMPONENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS: END QUOTE. WE COULD ALSO ENCOURAGE PREPARATION OF AN AGREED ALLIED MOVE ON MANEUVER PARAMETERS, INCLUDING EITHER ELEMENTS OF CANADIAN APPROACH OR A SIMPLE CONCESSION FROM PRESENT ALLIED POSITIONS ON ONE OR ANOTHER OF PARAMETERS.

B. ALTERNATIVELY, WE COULD INFORM SOVIETS THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO MOVE TOWARDS A PURELY VOLUNTARY MANUEVERS TEXT, BUT THAT CBMS IN GENRAL ARE A DELICATE MATTER ON WHICH SOME US ALLIES HAVE STRONGLY HELD VIEWS. WE WOULD TELL ALLIES THAT BASIC SOVIET APPROACH IS ACCEPTABLE TO US, BUT WE WOULD DECLINE TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE AMONG ALLIES IN DEVELOPING A COMPROMISE.

7. IN SUPPORT OF OPTION A, WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE TOO DIFFICULT TO BUILD AN ALLIED CONSENSUS FOR INSERTION INTO MANEUVER CBM OF WORDS "ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS," WHICH WERE USED BY AMBASSADOR MENDELEVICH IN CONFIDENTIAL

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MARCH 18 STATEMENT, AND TO CONSTRUCT A TEXT AROUND THEM WITHOUT REFERENCE TO TEXT SOVIETS HAVE GIVEN US (THEREBY AVOIDING ANY IMPLICATION OF BILATERALISM). MOREOVER, ALLIED RECETPTIVENESS TO VOLUNTARY LANGUAGE HAS BEEN ENHANCED BY MEDELEVICH CLARIFICATION IN SUBCOMMITTEE THAT NATURE OF COMMITMENT (USE OF WORDS "WILL," "SHOULD," "INTEND TO") NEEDNOT BE SETTLED YET, AND THAT ONLY THE PRINCIPLE OF ESTABLISHING A "VOLUNTARY" BASIS FOR THE CBM WOULD NEED TO BE ESTABLISHED TO ELICIT FURTHR SOVIET FLEXIBILITY.

8. IF WE CHOSE OPTION A, THIS WOULD OF COURSE TEND TO ACCELERATTE THE PACE OF STAGE II NEGOTIATIONS. DISADVANTAGE OF OPTION A IS THAT WE WOULD APPEAR TO PREEMT UK, WHICH HAS TAKEN LEAD FOR ALLIES ON THIS ISSUE IN THE PAST. IT WOULD ALSO TEND TO ISOLATE THE NEUTRALS AND ROMANIA, WHO HOLD STRONGER VIEWS THAN ALLIES ON LEVEL OF OBLIGATION FOR MANEUVERS MEASURE. FINALLY, WE MIGHT GIVE CREDENCE TO RUMORS OF A US-SOVIET UNDERSTANDING ON PEACEFUL CHANGE OF FRONTIERS ISSUE. IF WE CHOSE OPTION B, THIS WOULD BE IN CONFORMITY WITH OUR BASIC LOW-KEY

POSTURE ON CBM'S FROM OUTSET OF STAGE II. THIS CHOICE WOULD DISAPPOINT THE SOVIETS SOMEWHAT, BUT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSURE THEM THAT THE US POSITION WAS BASICALLY POSITIVE. MOREOVER, THEY WILL SOON SENSE, WE BELIEVE, THAT THE GENERAL ALLIED REACTION IS POSITIVE AND THAT THEY CAN GAIN THEIR BASIC OBJECTIVES HERE WITHOUT ACTIVE US COOPERATION, ALTHOUGH IT WILL TAKE LONGER IF WE DECLINE THE ACTIVE ROLE THEY WANT US TO ASSUME.

9. DELEGATION WOULD RECOMMEND OPTION B BECAUSE IT IS LIKELY TO CAUSE FEWER PROBLEMS WITH ALLIES AND FRIENDLY NEUTRAL GOVERNMENTS.

10. ACTION REQUESTED: GUIDANCE ON WHICH OF TWO OPTIONS ABOVE WE SHOULD PURSUE, IF POSSIBLE BY MARCH 24. DALE

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## Message Attributes

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